DISSECTIONS OF THE DURA MATER FROM BELOW.

By J. SYMINGTON, M.D., F.R.C.S. Ed., F.R.S.;
Professor of Anatomy, Queen's College, Belfast.

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The skull had been sawn across in the usual position adopted in the removal of the brain, but in place of taking off the calvaria the base of the skull was cut away. Before doing this the periosteum of the orbit was detached from the bone in order to preserve its continuity with the dura mater at the sphenoidal fissure and the optic foramen. The structures passing through the foramina at the base of the skull were defined along with their sheaths of dura mater. The skull was then gradually cut away after being detached from the dura mater. In most situations this is easily done, but special care is necessary to preserve the dural prolongation into the internal auditory meatus and to avoid tearing of the dura mater over the petrous part of the temporal bone. Some trouble may also be experienced in removing the dorsum sellæ and the anterior clinoid processes from the deep recesses in which they lie. Specimens prepared in this way are useful for the demonstration of the relations of the dura mater to the nerves and blood vessels, and afford instructive views of the topography of these structures at the base of the skull, especially of the Gasserian ganglion and the divisions of the fifth nerve.

In the ordinary method of removing the brain the arachnoid at its base is torn across in various places, and the cranial nerves divided, so that the subarachnoid cisternæ and the course of the cranial nerves through the subarachnoid spaces cannot be properly studied. On the other hand, in specimens with the dura mater exposed from below, the subsequent dissection of the arachnoid and of the contents of the subarachnoid space is greatly facilitated.